Created by: COVID Advocacy NY
Web version of the toolkit: COVIDAdvocacyNY.org/stopmaskbanny
Link to Google Doc version of toolkit: bit.ly/StopMaskBanNY
#NoNYMaskBan

STOP NY MASK BAN ACTION TOOLKIT

Join us in speaking out against a mask ban and urge Governor Kathy Hochul, Mayor Eric Adams, and New York State and New York City elected officials to uphold the right of all New Yorkers to wear a mask.

BACKGROUND:

- In June 2024,Governor Hochul and NYC Mayor Adams announced that they were looking into plans to ban masks in New York, specifically mentioning protests and on subways.
- The NY State legislature is out of session until January 2025. However, there are rumors they may return for a special session in 2024 and a mask ban may be one of the things they could address.
- Two problematic mask ban bills were already introduced in the NY State legislature this year:
    - A10057A/S09867 - "Establishes the offense of concealment of identity in a lawful assembly, unlawful assembly or riot."
        - Bill sponsored and co-sponsored by Democrats.
        - The bill would only allow a limited health exception "during a declared public health emergency," which ended last year for COVID-19.
    - A10043/S09194 - "Establishes the crimes of deceptive wearing of a mask and aggravated deceptive wearing of a mask"
        - Bill sponsored and co-sponsored by Republicans.
        - The bill does not include a health exception.

ACTIONS:

1) **Contact Governor Hochul.** Urge her not to ban masks.
    a) Phone: 518-474-8390 (press 1 to leave a message, press 2 to speak to a person)
    b) Email: https://governor.ny.gov/content/governor-contact-form
    c) Mail:
    The Honorable Kathy Hochul
    Governor of New York State
    NYS State Capitol Building
    Albany, NY 12224
    d) Twitter: @GovKathyHochul

2) **Contact your NYS Senator and Assemblymember.** Urge them to speak out against mask bans and not to support mask ban legislation.
    a) Find your state elected officials and their contact info at: https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials

3) **Contact NYS Senate and Assembly leadership.** Urge them to speak out against mask bans and not to support mask ban legislation.
    a) NYS Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie
        i) Phone: 518-455-3791
        ii) Email: Speaker@nyassembly.gov
        iii) Twitter: @CarlHeastie
    b) NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
        i) Phone: (518) 455-2585
        ii) Email: scousins@nysenate.gov
        iii) Twitter: @AndreaSCousins

4) **Contact NYS Senate and Assembly Health Committee Chairs.** Urge them to speak out against mask bans and not to support mask ban legislation.
    a) NYS Senate Health Committee Chair J. Gustavo Rivera
        i) Phone: Albany Office - 518-455-3395
        ii) Email: grivera@nysenate.gov
        iii) Twitter: @NYSenatorRivera
    b) NYS Assembly Health Committee Chair Amy Paulin
        i) NOTE: Paulin is a co-sponsor for the mask ban bill A10057A.
        ii) Phone: Albany Office - 518-455-5585

iii) Email: paulina@nyassembly.gov
iv) Twitter: @AmyPaulin

5) **Sign up for an account on the NY Senate webpage and let them know you oppose each of the mask ban bills.** There is a question on the right side of the webpage for each bill that asks if you oppose or support the bill. Write that you oppose the bill. In addition, if possible, add a comment expressing opposition to the mask ban bills.
    a) S09867
    b) A10057A
    c) A10043
    d) S09194

6) **Contact your local elected officials**, including City Council Members and NYC Borough Presidents. Urge them to speak out against mask bans.
    a) Find your city elected officials and their contact info at: https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials

7) Contact NYC Mayor Adams.
    a) Email: https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/mayor-contact.page
    b) Phone: 311 or 212-NEW-YORK outside NYC
    c) Twitter: @NYCMayor and @NYCMayorsOffice
    d) Mail:
    Mayor Eric Adams
    City Hall
    New York, NY 10007

8) **For those not in NY State, you could contact the NY's Tourism Board** and let them know you won't be traveling to NY State or are canceling your travel plans to NY State due to the proposed mask ban.
    a) Email: info@iloveny.com
    b) Twitter: @I_LOVE_NY
    c) More info: https://www.iloveny.com/

9) **Write a letter to the editor or op-ed.** See examples below.

10) **Post your opposition to a mask ban on social media and share why you still wear a mask. Use the hashtag #NoNYMaskBan.**

11) **If you are Jewish, sign on to this sign-on letter to state leaders organized by Jews for Mask Rights.** This letter is open to all Jewish people affected by this legislation, whether as New Yorkers, commuters, or tourists.

12) **Spread the word!** Share a link to this toolkit (http://bit.ly/StopMaskBanNY) and graphics below to encourage other people to take action.

13) **Wear a mask!** Post a photo of yourself wearing a mask on social media. If you hold a public event, require masks at your event and post photos with everyone wearing a mask.

SAMPLE SCRIPTS:

For Governor:
My name is _____ and I live in New York. I'm calling to urge the Governor not to ban masks.

Explain in a sentence or two why you are against a mask ban.

Examples:

- Mask bans endanger my health and the health of all New Yorkers.
- I have Long COVID and wear a mask to prevent reinfection and getting worse.
- I wear a mask to help me stay safe and help protect my partner/child/loved one.
- It is easy to catch COVID if you are unmasked. Anyone can become disabled by Long COVID. I need to protect my health.

For NY State Legislators:

My name is _____ and I live in your district in _____. I'm calling to urge the Senator/Assemblymember to speak out publicly against mask bans and not to support mask ban legislation, including bills A10057A/S09867 and A10043/S09194.

(Check the bill links above to see if your legislator is a co-sponsor. If your NY legislator is a co-sponsor, urge them to remove themselves as co-sponsor.)

EDITORIALS, OP-EDS, AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

- "Editorial: No hiding flaws of proposed mask ban," Editorial Board, *Albany Times Union,* June 25, 2024, https://www.timesunion.com/opinion/article/editorial-no-hiding-flaws-proposed-mask-ban-19532220.php
- "Editorial: Banning masks at protests is a bad idea," Editorial Board, *Los Angeles Times,* June 27, 2024, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-06-27/editorial-banning-masks-at-protests-is-a-bad-idea
- "A subway mask ban won't fight antisemitism, but it will punish immunocompromised Jews like me," Rikki Baker Keusch, *Forward*, June 18, 2024, https://forward.com/opinion/624613/hochul-mask-ban-subway-antisemitism-jews/
- "Drop It," Letter to the Editor from Joe Rappaport, Executive Director, Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, *The Daily News*, June 17, 2024, https://www.nydailynews.com/2024/06/17/readers-sound-off-on-netanyahus-visit-satanism-and-a-proposed-mask-ban

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Long COVID Justice Resist Mask Bans Resource List - https://longcovidjustice.org/resources/resist-mask-bans/
- Mask Together America #StopMaskBans - bit.ly/StopMaskBans
- ACT UP NY social media posts - https://www.instagram.com/actupny/
- Jews for Mask Rights letter campaign - https://www.jewsformaskrights.com/

- Artists in Resistance (A.I.R.) NYC and Mask Bloc NYC Statement - https://www.instagram.com/p/C8XX_-Aukcd/
- Jews For Racial & Economic Justice statement - https://www.jfrej.org/news/2024/06/nyc-jews-condemn-proposed-mask-ban-in-ny-state
- New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) post - https://x.com/NYCLU/status/1802041325988024346
- Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID) post - https://x.com/BrooklynBCID/status/1801387921305465228
- Memo of support from groups who worked to repeal the former NY mask ban in 2020, “Making Permanent the Repeal of the ‘Mask Ban’ - https://www.nyclu.org/uploads/2020/06/20200612-memo-maskrepealer.pdf

SHARABLE GRAPHICS:

(Image Description: Drawing of a person wearing a NY hat and wearing a mask. Text says Action Alert CONTACT GOVERNOR HOCHUL and urge her not to ban masks! 518-474-8390. #NoNYMaskBan COVIDAdvocacyNY.org)

Action Alert
CONTACT YOUR NY STATE SENATOR AND ASSEMBLYMEMBER
NY
And urge them to speak out against mask bans and to commit to not support mask ban legislation.
#NoNYMaskBan COVIDAdvocacyNY.org

(Image Description: Drawing of a person wearing a mask and NY hat. Text says: CONTACT YOUR NY STATE SENATOR AND ASSEMBLY MEMBER And urge them to speak out against mask bans and to commit to not support mask ban legislation. #NoNYMaskBan COVIDAdvocacyNY.org)

(Image Description: Text: TAKE ACTION AGAINST A MASK BAN IN NY! Action Toolkit: bit.ly/StopMaskBanNY. Picture of a hand holding a bullhorn and COVID Advocacy NY logo and QR code.)